

REMARKS

Claims 10 to 12, 16 to 21, 29 and 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicants' Admitted Prior Art (AAPA) in view of Miller et al. (US 6,584,671). Claims 13, 15, 22 and 24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over AAPA in view of Miller et al. (US 6,584,671) as applied to claims 10 and 20 and further in view of Warichet et al. (US 6,921,439). Claims 14 and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over AAPA in view of Miller et al. (US 6,584,671) as applied to claims 10 and 20 and further in view of Shtikan et al. (US 7,192,624).

Claims 13, 14, 22 and 23 have been canceled without prejudice. Claims 31 to 34 have been added, support being found at [0036] of the present specification for example.

Reconsideration of the application based on the following is respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 10 to 12, 16 to 21, 29 and 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over AAPA in view of Miller et al. Claims 14 and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over AAPA in view of Miller et al. and further in view of Shtikan et al. Claims 10 and 20 have been amended to recite the limitations of claims 14 and 23 respectively so the rejection with respect to those claims will be addressed.

AAPA is disclosed in the specification at [0001] to [0004].

Miller et al. discloses a method and an electromagnetic assembly in the form of a magnet pole or of a stator packet of an extended stator linear motor for a magnetic levitation train. (See Abstract).

Shtikan et al. discloses a continuously operating furnace and method for obtaining a thermal diffusion coating on the outside surface of metallic articles. (See Abstract).

Claim 10 recites a process for producing a press-hardened component from a semi-finished product made of unhardened, hot-formable steel sheet, the process comprising:

forming a component blank from the steel semi-finished product using a cold-forming process, the component blank including a margin contour corresponding approximately to a contour of the press-hardened component and a margin edge;

trimming the component blank at the margin edge to the margin contour;

heating and press-hardening the trimmed component blank using a hot-forming tool; and covering the press-hardened component blank with a corrosion-prevention layer in a coating step, wherein the coating step includes a thermal diffusion process.

Claim 20 recites a process for producing a press-hardened component from a semi-finished product made of unhardened, hot-formable steel sheet, the process comprising:

heating and press-hardening the semi-finished steel product using a hot-forming tool so as to form a press-hardened component blank, having a margin contour corresponding approximately to the press-hardened component and a margin edge;

trimming the press-hardened component blank at the margin edge to the margin contour; covering the press-hardened, trimmed component blank with a corrosion-prevention layer in a coating step, wherein the coating step includes a thermal diffusion process.

It is respectfully submitted that one of skill in the art would not have applied the Shtikan thermal diffusion process to coat press-hardened, trimmed component blanks discussed in AAPA, or be used with the epoxy resin coatings of Miller, or to any combination of the two. Shtikan operates at temperatures above those suitable for press-hardened trimmed blanks and the epoxy resin coating of Miller, and it is respectfully submitted that one of skill in the art would not have combined these references. In addition, the Miller disclosure teaches away from such thermal diffusion, as heating occurs prior to any epoxy resin is added under normal temperatures. See Miller at col .1, lines 25 to 31..

Withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) to claim 10 and its dependent claims and claim 20 and its dependent claims is respectfully requested.

#### New Claims

New claims 31 to 34 show further features not shown in Shtikan.

CONCLUSION

The present application is respectfully submitted as being in condition for allowance and applicants respectfully request such action.

Respectfully submitted,

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